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of Illinois

*κοα κ. Blagojevich,*  
*Governor*



Department of Agriculture  
*Charles Hartke, Director*

Illinois Terrorism Task Force

Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association

Illinois Veterinary Emergency Response Team

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A sepia-toned background image featuring a dog standing in the upper half and a cat's head in the lower half, both looking towards the left.

# Emergency Preparedness Planning for Pets & Livestock

# PREPARING ANIMALS FOR EMERGENCIES MAKES SENSE

## 1 Prepare

### Pet Emergency Supply Kit

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival, particularly food and water, and consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your

pets will need to stay where you are. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you and your pets have to get away. Plus, be sure to review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.



### FOOD & WATER

Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container. Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets in addition to water you need for yourself and your family.

### MEDICINES & VITAL RECORDS

Keep extra supplies of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container. In addition, place copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents, medical records and emergency contact information (such as animal control, Humane Society, or ASPCA and emergency vet hospitals) in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and also add them to your kit.

### PET FIRST-AID KIT

Most kits should include: cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors; antibiotic ointment; flea and tick prevention; latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first-aid reference book.

# **GET READY NOW!**

## **COLLAR WITH ID TAG, HARNESS OR LEASH**

Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times. Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit.

## **TALK TO YOUR VETERINARIAN**

Discuss the types of things that you should include in your pet's emergency first-aid kit. Get names of veterinarians or veterinary hospitals in other cities where you might need to seek temporary shelter. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you and one in your pet's emergency supply kit. You should also consider talking with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as micro-chipping and enrolling in a recovery database. Keeping your emergency contact information current and listing with a reliable recovery database is essential to you being reunited with your pet.

## **CRATE OR OTHER PET CARRIER**

If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pets and animals with you provided that it is practical to do so. In many cases, your ability to do so will be aided by having a sturdy, safe, comfortable crate or carrier ready for transporting your pet. The carrier should be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down.

## **SANITATION**

Include pet litter and litter box if appropriate, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water by using 1/8 of a teaspoon or 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented or color safe bleaches, or those with added cleaners.



## PICTURE

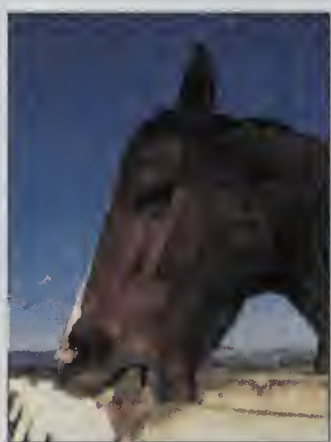
If you become separated from your pet during an emergency a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.

## FAMILIAR ITEMS

Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help relieve pet stress.

# 2 Plan

## What you will do in an Emergency



Be prepared to assess the situation. Use your emergency supply kit you have on hand to take care of yourself and ensure your pet's safety during an emergency. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency,

the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use common sense and the information you are learning here to determine if there is immediate danger. In any emergency local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening or what you should do. Therefore, watch TV, or listen to the radio for instructions. If you're specifically told to evacuate, shelter-in-place or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

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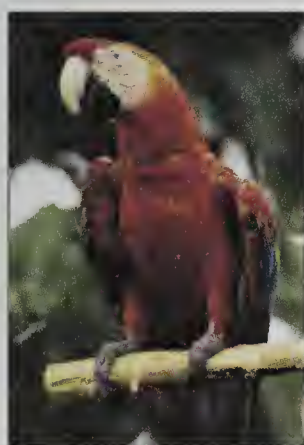
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## **CREATE A PLAN TO GET AWAY**

Plan how you will assemble your pets and anticipate where you will go. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you. If you go to a public shelter, keep in mind your animals may not be allowed inside. Secure appropriate lodging in advance depending on the number and types of animals in your care. Consider family or friends willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency. Other options may include; a hotel or motel that takes pets or a boarding facility, such as a kennel or veterinary hospital, that is near an evacuation facility or your family's meeting place. Find out before an emergency happens if any of these facilities in your area might be viable for you and your pets.

## **DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM**

Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Talk with your pet care buddy about your evacuation plans and show them where you keep your pet's emergency supply kit. Also designate specific locations; one in your immediate neighborhood and another farther away where you will meet in an emergency. Obtain "PETS INSIDE" stickers and place them on your doors and windows. Include numbers and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker for emergencies. And, if time permits, write "Evacuated with Pets" across the stickers should you flee with your pets.



**Check with your veterinarian and  
Illinois Department of Agriculture for  
information about possible disease outbreaks.**

**Illinois Department of Agriculture  
866.299.9256 • [www.agr.state.il.us](http://www.agr.state.il.us)**

# 3 Special Considerations

## Horse & Livestock Owners

### PRIOR TO AN EMERGENCY

Familiarize yourself with types of disasters that could occur in your area, including man-made situations such as chemical spills near highways. Develop a written plan of action for each. Include a list of resources (suppliers, trucks and trailers), evacuation sites, emergency phone numbers and people who can help during an emergency. Store a copy with important papers in a plastic bag or waterproof container. Review the plan regularly with everyone involved.

Survey your property for the best location for animal confinement in each type of disaster. Identify food and water sources that do not rely on electricity, which could be lost during an emergency.

Decide where to take animals if evacuation is necessary. Contact fairgrounds, other producers (especially those with empty barns and pastures), stockyards and auction markets about their policies and ability to take livestock temporarily in an emergency. Have several sites in mind in case your first choice is unavailable.

Familiarize yourself with several evacuation routes to your destination. Avoid routes likely to be traveled heavily by people unless instructed to follow official routes.

Photograph, identify (brands, ear-tags, nose prints, retinal scans, etc.) and inventory (by age, sex, weight, breed) your animals. Identify in a written list which animals (such as breeding stock) are of the highest priority or most valuable. Make sure others know your plans. Keep copies of important papers.



Keep vaccinations and boosters up-to-date. Record the dates, dosages and types of medications and health products the animals have received and record dosing instructions and dietary requirements. Keep this information with the emergency supply kit.

## **DURING AN EMERGENCY**

Listen to the local radio/TV stations for emergency information. If possible, evacuate your livestock, take all vaccination and medical records, the emergency supply kit and enough hay, feed and water for a minimum of 72 hours. Call ahead to your destination to make sure the site is still available.

Don't forget basic bio-security measures if you evacuate, especially if you know your herd is under quarantine or has a communicable disease.

If you must evacuate without your animals, leave them in an appropriate pre-selected area. Leave enough hay, food and water for 72 hours. Do NOT rely on automatic watering systems; power may be lost.

## **AFTER AN EMERGENCY**

Check fences - be sure they are intact. Check pastures and fences for sharp objects that could injure livestock.

Beware of downed power lines.

Beware of raccoons, skunks and other wild animals that may have entered the area and could pose a danger to your animals.

If animals are lost, contact veterinarians, humane societies, stables, surrounding farms and other facilities. Listen to the local radio for groups that may be accepting lost animals.

# 4 Stay Informed

## Know about Types of Emergencies

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit for yourself, your family and your pets, are the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region as well as emergency plans that have been established by your state and local government. Remember: disasters can be natural or man-made! For more information about how to prepare, visit [www.ready.illinois.gov](http://www.ready.illinois.gov), call 1-800-BE-READY or contact your local Illinois American Red Cross.

Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and follow instructions received from authorities. With these simple preparations you can be ready for the unexpected. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

**Preparing for your animals  
makes sense.**

**GET READY NOW!**



Institute of  
Government  
and Public Affairs  
*University of Illinois*

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